



## **DELINERATION AND PERUSAL OF THE POLITICAL DEPICTION IN ROMEN BASU'S OUTCAST**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*India is a secular and democratic country rich in culture, language, religion, caste, and varied communities. In spite of the fact, the country has been under the control of British Empire from 1858 to 1947. In the meanwhile, People prioritized caste, religion and politics. Politics played an important role in the independent country. The development of Indian literature gradually started its progress around the Education world. Most of the writers concentrated in the welfare of the people's particular community that's been alienated and marginalized by the society itself. The writers like Romen Basu, Mulk Raj Anand and Arundhati Roy focused on the socio-political milieu around the nation. Romen Basu's novels typically deal with the domestic, social and political taboos in which those are the concealed truth of the society. The protagonist in his novel Outcast endures lot of wrenches, sufferings and humiliations in the appellation of caste and politics. This paper analyses the political representations and contradictions of the novel Outcast in detail.*

**KEYWORDS:** Politics, Stigma of a marginalized individual, Subaltern, Political party.

Indian literature is composed with a mixture of different languages, slangs, writers from various communities and cultures. Precisely, Romen Basu, an esteemed Bengali writer overviewed the indifferences and irrelevances of the people and tried to throw his open views in his writings. He highlighted the struggles of an individual and the social representation of the low class people in the particular community. The characters in his novels are commonly free-spirited, broad thinker and the man of valor who never gives up in any situation. During his entire life the protagonist faces lots of challenges, hardships, obstacles and downfall throughout the plot. There is a clear picturization of the status, class and political background of the society in the entire fiction. Romen Basu tries to capture the inner beauty of the human heart through his art of writing. As a realistic writer, Basu attempts to



give us the brief description of the power of politics. He is considered to be the bold writer who pens all the struggles of the subaltern and political insights of different parties and their norms.

The cross-culture of the people was explained with the social unrest of the protagonist. Politics plays a vital role in determining the lives of people and the power to rule them with their superior authority. The downtrodden and underprivileged poor people falls in the trap of political parties by putting them in false promises stating them to light up their submerged lives. Romen Basu cultivated the moral principles and philosophies of the humanity to showcase the downtrodden, poor people's struggles to the world. He serves the right law of nature in his writings. He outlines the problem of untouchability, casteism through the place named Basuli, a small village in Bengal. The low class people have been brutally treated in the novel *Outcaste* and the episodes are well plotted throughout the story. The author pinpoints the real scenario of the low-high class community and the oppressive caste system was delineated properly. The struggles of the protagonist who belongs to the low class well knitted in the novel that is considered to the greatest outcry and voice of the downtrodden people.

*Outcaste* is the second rural novel of Romen Basu who often concentrates on the sufferings of the marginalized community. The whole novel talks about the character Sambal, a revolutionary man, seeking for social equality who refuses to bend his knees to the high class people, consistently the novel determines the character Putki, lover of Sambal, Parashar, the broadminded teacher whose been the greatest support for Samabal and the communists who uses Sambal as the weapon or arrow for their opposite parties and their party principles. The political parties rule or organize the rural places in India and finds their progression has been clearly exposed in the novel. The northern parts of India were tied up strongly by caste and religion that divides the union of the humankind is painted by the author. The economic, political and religious exploitation of the low castes is put directly to the reader's perspective and comments. The minds of the people are polluted with money, caste, class and social divisions that are to be eradicated in the society. The protagonist fights hardly to bring up the balance in the community and that creates the magnificent impact for the readers and the audiences. Political parties corrupt the mind of people, making them to believe that their actions or deeds are only for the betterment of people lives.

The protagonist fights for the communal harmony among people without holding the injustices of social and political system. The novel vividly depicts the major issues of the downtrodden people and the pitiable social, political background of the village Basuli.



The nation had a horrendous effect of their treachery, the way of treating people like beasts made them to struggle hard for their liberty. Subsequently after the termination of British monarchy India was ruled by our Government. Communism was popular around the lower class people which raised voice against the cruel high class people. It completely supports the common folks for their equality that is equality in wages, rights to speak and perform socially. Meanwhile, communism has spreaded all over the nation with the support of great leaders. Since it was not successful in Bengal, the workers got benefitted with their demands of land reforms, food production and rights of property. They tried to eradicate the Zamindari system in Bengal which was the system of getting one third of the crop produced by the peasants. Zamindars were known as the owners of the village and they collected lot of tax from the poor. Typically, the high class people carried name suffixes like Pillai, Sri, Rai, Rao, Khan and Sardar. They join hands with East India Company i.e., the British and shared the tax money that's been collected from the peasants. In 18<sup>th</sup> century Bengal faced famines and there were loss of humans and property. People couldn't endure the sufferings from Zamindars and British and indulged in protest and peasant movements seeking for their freedom. Naxal movement was also formed against the Government and police violence and atrocities. More than thousand people got arrested supporting Naxal and Congress, also brutally murdered by the police. Later the Zamindar Abolition Act was passed in Tamilnadu, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.

People suffered in the hands of Zamindars and British force; consequently they started hiding themselves in home and run for their life. Election turned the history of India as Congress ruled India for 5 years. Due to the writers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Rabindranath Tagore and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee sati was banned and widow remarriage, education for women was accepted. Their writings created a revolution all around the world and people started to regret for their past actions and injustices that they provided to the poor low class people. At the time of the novel *Outcast* written, Congress party reigned India, which Rajiv Gandhi served as the prime minister of India. During those times, Communism had been vastly scattered around West Bengal and Kerala. Romen Basu has pointed out the Congress and Communist party which took over the Bengal. The protests held against the Zamindars and boycotted in asking the raise of their wages. The lands, wells and temples were only occupied by the high caste people, owned by the Zamindars.

The downtrodden were humiliated and outcasted from the society as the politicians are the driving force of the village. The character Sambal presents the true nature of the high caste people by pains and unbearable sufferings. Sambal seeks the help of political parties, but end in failure as they turn against him. A Zamindar, ParameshGanguli exploits the low caste people ignoring their basic needs and rights. The ultimate rights like school for children, medicines in dispensary, water from



tube wells has been denied for the low caste people as they were framed as untouchables. Sambal wants to break this inequality or injustice to his people but fails to do so because of politicians who had hold of Zamindars and landlords. Sambal was very patient till the horrible incidents took place in his village. His father was physically assaulted and beaten terribly for entering into Kali temple. The another incident was with a woman of low caste visited a grocery shop in need of oil. She was left out of the shop by the owner insisting to keep the bottle away and he poured oil spilling half on the ground. He asked twelve annas to pay which were actually six annas.

The women refused to pay and said she has only six annas. He came out with a stick and tried to beat her. She cried and threw the money on his shop and ran away out of fear. This made Sambal to involve in revolution, asking their basic rights for the people of his community. Most of the villagers supported Sambal and suggested him to join Communist party for extra strong support. He lead the villagers and the Zamindars insulted him for this arousal. He is frustrated by the unjust society and the politics around the village. He joins Communist in belief of equality in the society. Manmatha, the communist leader supported Sambal stating that he will help him to eradicate caste system. Later Sambal comes to know the true colour of Manmatha and outraged for his treachery, who washes his hand to save communist party, as it was lead mainly by the superiors. Communist made use of the villagers only for the winning in election against Congress party. After knowing about Manmatha, Sambal ignored to support Communist as it doesn't wipe the stain of low caste people's injustices in society.

The author had divided the novel into three segments of politics, they are, Social politics, Family Politics and National politics. Family politics was dominated by Men of the family, considering women as their sexual object and machines to produce children that too only sons. They were ill-treated, disrespected in the name of Man chauvinism. A woman named Ganga from the village was sick and her husband refused to take her to the hospital telling the allopathic doctors are dangerous and insist her only to pray for her recovery. She couldn't bear the pain and she heard about a Muslim man who has healing powers by providing herbs to the patients. She visited his house that is situated in the border of the village. Muslims and low caste people were outcasted by the high caste people. The Muslim man refused to give her medicines, but she forced him to cure.

She got relieved from the pain of her body of those herbs. One day she went to visit the man, unfortunately he went far away. She has to wait for him for few hours. She was in hunger and after his arrival he provided her with leftover rice and vegetables. She couldn't refuse and ate the food given by him. Her husband waited furiously and after knowing she had food in a Muslim house she was



accused of lacking hindu rights, he set fire to the house locking Ganga and his child inside. Her face was half burnt and admitted in the hospital. The community supported Ganga's husband promising to stand by his side if police encounters the village. This is the appalling family and social politics explained throughout the novel by the author.

The Congress government created Panchayat to break the class and status but the Zamindar ParameshGanguli doesn't allow panchayat stating he is the only Panchayat of the village. He was supported by the castes Brahmin,Kayastha and other high castes. Once a Brahmin man teaches Santhals (low caste) and tried to seduce a fourteen year old girl. The Santhals were furious and chased him to kill. But they were stopped by the Brahmins telling the blood of Brahmins should not be spilled in the ground as it was very noble. They shaved his head and chased him out of their area. The degradation of minorities is shown clearly in the novel *Outcast*. Another horrible incident was exposed by the author, the teacher named Doulat who belong to low class, well versed in mathematics teach in school. Tagar, student of the school both were in love with each other. Tagar from high caste was locked in the house. But Sambal and Putki planned them for elopement. The villagers come to know the plans and with the help of Tagar's brother they shot Tagar confirming as murder. They searched for Doulat while Sambal to save him he shouted and distracted the crowd. The people beat Sambal harshly. The blood gushed out of his skin and he ran to take this to magistrate. But he was not allowed to visit him. This shows that the government runs under the support of high caste or high class people and the needs of low caste people are ignored without consideration. The poor people was arrested for no reason and beaten horribly.

To increase the count or members of their party communists make use of the people by giving false promises and washing their hands when they are truly in need of. Manmatha the communist leader created good persona in the mind of village women and they insisted their husbands to join the party. His moves were tricky and technically he increased the members of the party. Politicians try to take advantage of the problems of the low caste by supporting a particular group which would serve their political ends. The party members planned themselves to attract most of the people in Basuli and later received the support of zamindar and Bagdis. This made Sambal to organize a separate powerful group and decided to blow up the shiva temple. He was out of control and the society of upper class transformed him to be a naxalite from a kind human being.

He had no choice of being a hidden part and later naxal or naxalite is considered to be a member of communist party of India, started in West Bengal where the movement had its origin. The politics played drastic role in those times making use of young man's power and support. The end of



the novel is hopeless and the protagonist Sambal dies in vain. Romen Basu had a deep understanding of never ending caste discrimination and political dominance in the country which he exposed in his writing realistically. Through his work, he pleads for the communal harmony of the people that is the greatest lack of the developing nation.

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